major cities and towns, through a network of 290 ambient air quality monitoring stations under the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring (NAAQM) Network. The data help understand the trends in air quality.

(v) A major vehicular pollution survey covering 12 major cities in the country, namely; Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kanpur, Lucknow, Nagpur, was carried out by the Central Pollution Control Board during 1987. The survey has helped understand the levels of pollution in these cities and recommend suitable abatement measures for its prevention and control.

(vi) The Government in the first phase reduced the lead content in petrol supplied in the 4 metros of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai from June 1994 to less than 0.15 grams per litre of petrol. Low-lead petrol was introduced in the entire country on 1.1.1997.

(vii) Unleaded petrol (petrol with a lead content of less than 0.013 grams per litre of petrol) was introduced in the 4 metros Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai from 1.4.1995 for the use of new 4-wheeler petrol vehicles fitted with catalytic converters introduced in these metros from this date. This programme was extended to all the major cities including capitals of all States and UTs from 1.6.1998 and would cover the entire country from 1.4.2000. Emissions from vehicles fitted with catalytic converters are reduced by more than 50% as compared to ordinary vehicles.

(viii) A similar programme at the national level has been launched for the introduction of low-sulphur diesel, to reduce the levels of particulate emissions from diesel vehicles. In the first phase, low-sulphur diesel (of 0.5% sulphur) was introduced in the 4 metros of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai with effect from 1.4.1996 and 0.25% sulphur diesel has been introduced in the Taj Trapezium from 1.9.1996, in Delhi with effect from 14.8.1997 and in the three metros of Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai effective from 1.4.1998. Low-sulphur diesel of 0.25% of sulphur is planned to be introduced in the entire country from 1.9.1999.

(ix) Control of vehicular pollution from in-use vehicles is implemented through the respective State Transport Departments of various States. The Central Government has advised the various states to strictly enforce the standards for emissions from on-road vehicles and create awareness amongst the general public on the various aspects such as maintenance of vehicles, health effects of vehicular pollution and punitive measures for violations of emission standards for on-road vehicles. It has been recommended that public transport should be strengthened and mass transport system introduced in all the major cities.

Increase in Bronchial asthma due to pollution

4152. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bronchial asthma is increasing more in India and all over the world including the developed countries where the problem of air pollution is more or less controlled;

(b) if so, what is the position in India, where pollution is spreading day by day; and

(c) what steps have been taken during the last one decade to control increase or incidence of air pollution in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) No conclusive scientific data on the incidence of asthma due to air pollution is available.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to control environmental pollution include the following:

(1) The Government has formulated a comprehensive Policy Statement for Abatement of Pollution which envisages integration of environmental and economic aspects of development planning, lays stress on preventive aspects of pollution, promotion of cleaner technologies to redue pollution and health related aspects;

(2) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment and also for the shifting of industries from congested areas.

(3) Low lead petrol had been introduced in the four metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai w.e.f. June 1994. Subsequently, Unleaded petrol and catalytic converter fitted vehicles were introduced in the above mentioned 4 cities with effect from 1.4.1995;

(4) The Government is implementing a major plan of action for introduction of unleaded petrol and catalytic converter fitted vehicles and introduction of low sulphur diesel for cleaner diesel vehicles in a phased manner. Fuel quality standards for petrol and diesel have been notified.

(5) Gross emission standards for on-road vehicles and mass emission standards for all categories of new vehicles have been notified under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 and are being enforced by the Departments of Transport of the various States.

(6) For control of pollution from vehicles, emission norms for both petrol and diesel driven vehicles at the manufacturing stage were introduced for the first time in 1990 and made tighter in 1996. More stringent emission norms have also been notified and will come into effect from 1.4.2000.

(7) Surveys have been conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board on the vehicular emissions in the major cities and towns in the country. The findings of the survey have been used for taking mitigative measures.

(8) The ambient air quality of various cities and towns are being monitored regularly through a network of 290 monitoring stations under the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme.

(9) Emission from highly polluting industriai units and thermal power plants are regularly moitored by the Central Pollution Control Board and State Pollution Control Boards and action is taken against the defaulting units.

(10) Emissions and ambient air quality standards have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Alternative fuel to curb pollution

4153. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any measures to find out alternative fuels to curb vehicular pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to make such fuels popular and readily available?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A study sponsored by the Central Pollution